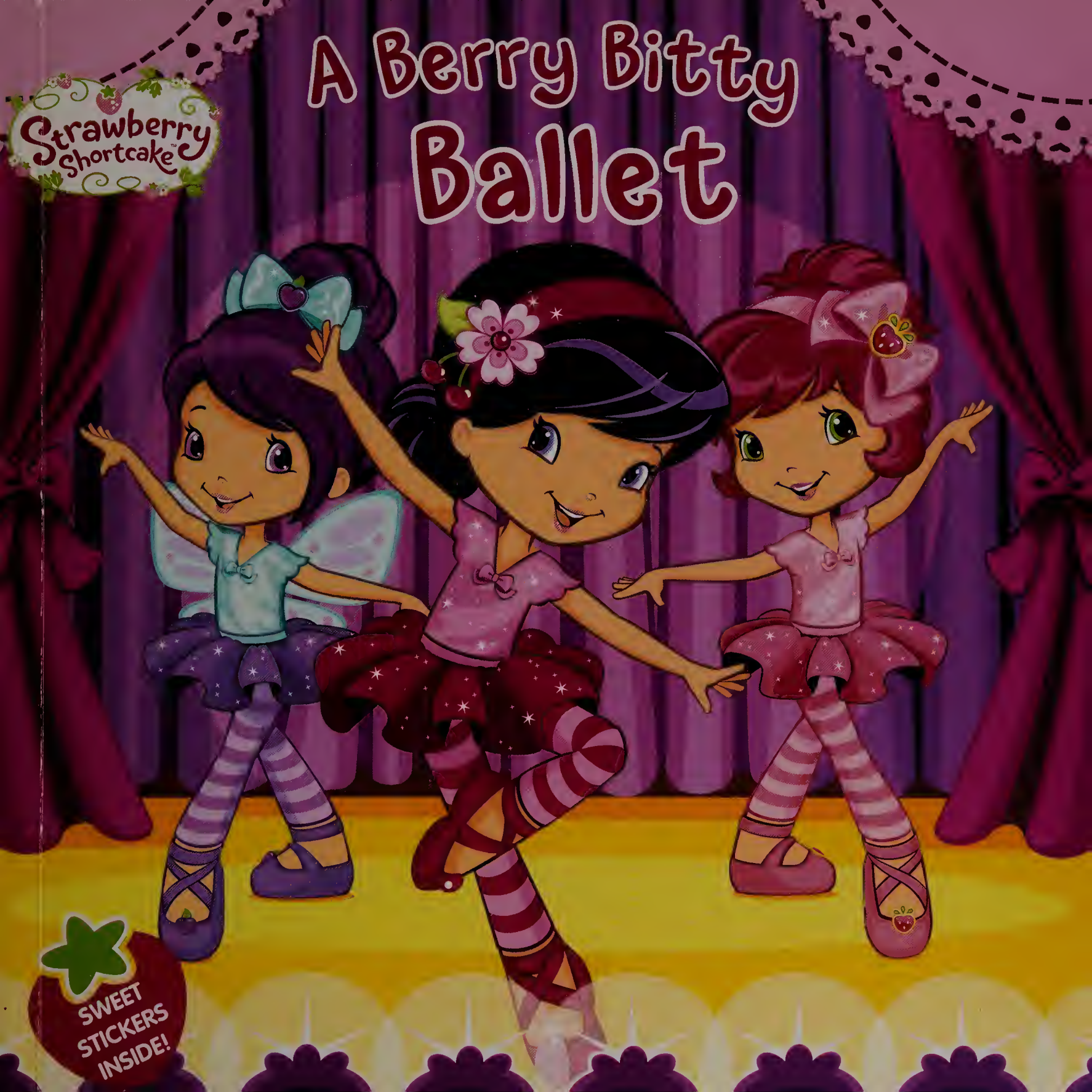
Strawberry Shortcake™
A Berry Bitty Ballet
SWEET STICKERS INSIDE!

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ISBN 978-0-448-46279-0
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Strawberry Shortcake™

A Berry Bitty Ballet

By Amy Ackelsberg
Illustrated by Laura Thomas

Grosset & Dunlap
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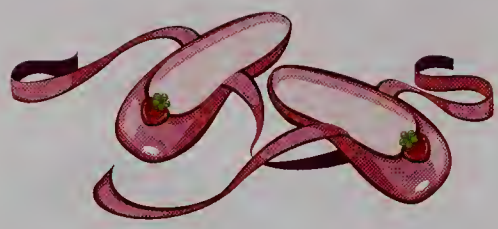

GROSSET & DUNLAP
Published by the Penguin Group
Penguin Group (USA) Inc., 375 Hudson Street, New York, New York 10014, USA
Penguin Group (Canada), 90 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 700, Toronto, Ontario M4P 2Y3, Canada
(a division of Pearson Penguin Canada Inc.)
Penguin Books Ltd, 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL, England
Penguin Ireland, 25 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2, Ireland (a division of Penguin Books Ltd)
Penguin Group (Australia), 707 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3008, Australia
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Penguin Books India Pvt Ltd, 11 Community Centre, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi—110 017, India
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(a division of Pearson New Zealand Ltd)
Penguin Books, Rosebank Office Park, 181 Jan Smuts Avenue, Parktown North 2193, South Africa
Penguin China, B7 Jaiming Center, 27 East Third Ring Road North, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100020, China

Penguin Books Ltd., Registered Offices: 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL, England

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ISBN 978-0-448-46279-0

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ALWAYS LEARNING

PEARSON

One morning, Strawberry Shortcake went to visit her friend Plum Pudding at her ballet studio. When she got there, Plum was hanging a poster for a new ballet coming to Berry Bitty City.

"We should try out with all our friends!" exclaimed Strawberry.

"Great idea!" said Plum.

On the day of the auditions, Strawberry and her friends joined the line of townspeople waiting to try out.

One by one, the girls performed. They leaped and twirled and pranced.

Then Postmaster Bumblebee, Sadiebug, and Mr. Longface Caterpillar tried out, too.

When the results were posted . . .

. . . all the girls got parts!
"We're going to be butterflies!" exclaimed Orange and Plum.
"We're going to be dancing flowers!" said Lemon, Raspberry, and Blueberry.

"Cherry, you won the lead role!" cried Strawberry.

"And, Strawberry, you're my understudy!" said Cherry. "That means we'll work together!"

"Great!" exclaimed Strawberry. "Let's go learn our parts and start rehearsing!"

The girls practiced every day to prepare for the big performance. Orange and Plum learned to flutter their arms like graceful butterflies. Raspberry, Lemon, and Blueberry danced and swayed like beautiful flowers blowing in the wind.

"This is so much fun!" exclaimed Strawberry as she and Cherry took turns spinning and jumping. Then they linked arms and did a final curtsy.

"Fruitastic!" cried their friends.

Soon it was the day of the big dress rehearsal.

"Time to try on our costumes!" said Raspberry.

There were glittery butterfly wings for Orange and Plum and colorful fabric flowers for Raspberry, Blueberry, and Lemon.

There was a beautiful pink tutu for Cherry, but there was nothing for Strawberry.

"I'm sorry, Strawberry," said Cherry. "You'll wear my costume if I can't perform in the show."

"Okay," said Strawberry sadly. Then she sat and watched while her friends danced under the spotlight.

The next day, Strawberry was at the café having lunch with Blueberry and Orange.

"I can't wait for the show!" said Blueberry.

"Me neither!" agreed Orange. "What about you, Strawberry?"

"Well," said Strawberry, "I know the understudy is an important job, but I wish I could be in the ballet, too!"

Suddenly, Strawberry's phone rang . . .

"We need you, Strawberry!" said Berrykin Bloom. "Cherry is sick! She can't perform in the ballet!"

"Oh no!" cried Strawberry. "Poor Cherry!"

Strawberry hurried to Plum's studio, where Plum helped her practice until her moves were perfect. Raspberry made sure Strawberry's tutu fit just right, and Lemon gave her a special hairstyle.

On the night of the performance, the theater was crowded with townspeople. They took their seats as the lights dimmed. The curtain lifted and the ballet began!

The dancers whirled and twirled and the audience clapped and cheered.
"Bravo!" they shouted.
Strawberry and her friends took a big bow.

"Great job, Strawberry!" Plum said after the curtain had closed. "You really saved the day!"

"Thanks, Plum," replied Strawberry. "I'm happy that I got a chance to perform, but now I'm sad that Cherry couldn't be here!"

"I have an idea!" said Orange. "Let's go visit Cherry and tell her about the show!"

"Yes!" cried her friends.

But when they walked backstage, they found . . .

"Cherry!" exclaimed Lemon. "Are you feeling better?"

"I wasn't sick," Cherry confessed. "I was only pretending, so that Strawberry could dance in the ballet."

"Oh, Cherry, you didn't have to do that!" cried Strawberry.

"I know," Cherry replied. "But I could tell how much you wanted to be in the show!"

Strawberry gave Cherry a big hug.

"Cherry, I'm so lucky to have a berry best friend like you!" said Strawberry.

"Thank you, Strawberry," said Cherry. "I'd trade the spotlight for your friendship any day."

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The ballet has come to Berry Bitty City! All the girls have parts, including Cherry Jam, who has the lead role, and Strawberry Shortcake, her understudy. When Cherry gets sick on opening night, Strawberry has to step in and save the day! Will Strawberry be able to learn Cherry's part in time, or will the ballet turn out to be a berry big disaster?

AMERICAN GREETINGS

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